

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for providing independent message notification to a message
2 recipient at the request of the sender, comprising the steps of:
3 receiving in a communications network the message from the sender;
4 determining whether the sender requested that the message recipient receive
5 independent notification of the message; and if so, then
6 establishing an identifier for the recipient; and
7 launching an independent notification to the message recipient identified by the
8 identifier.

1 2. The method according to claim 1 wherein the independent notification
2 includes a telephone call to the recipient.

1 3. The method according to claim 2 wherein the telephone call is routed to
2 one of a telephone set, a pager and facsimile machine associated with the message
3 recipient.

1 4. The method according to claim 1 wherein the message launched by the
2 sender comprises an e-mail message.

1 5. The method according to claim 4 wherein the network determines whether
2 the sender requested independent notification by examining a recipient notification
3 header in the e-mail message that will have a predetermined designation when the sender
4 has requested independent notification.

1 6. The method according to claim 5 wherein the network establishes an
2 identifier for the recipient by examining a recipient notification identifier header in the e-
3 mail message to determine if the sender has populated the recipient notification identifier
4 header with information identifying the recipient.

1 7. The method according to claim 6 wherein the network establishes an
2 identifier for the recipient by querying a database in accordance with a message address
3 for the recipient.

1 8. A method for providing voice notification to a message recipient at the
2 request of the sender to alert the recipient of an incoming message, comprising the steps
3 of:

4 receiving in a communications network the message from the sender;
5 determining whether the sender requested that the message recipient receive voice
6 notification of the message; and if so, then
7 establishing an identifier for the recipient; and
8 launching a voice telephone call to the message recipient identified by the
9 identifier.

1 9. The method according to claim 8 wherein the message launched by the
2 sender comprises an e-mail message.

1 10. The method according to claim 9 wherein the network determines whether
2 the sender requested voice notification by examining a recipient notification header in the
3 e-mail message that will have a predetermined designation when the sender has requested
4 voice notification.

1 11. The method according to claim 10 wherein the network establishes an
2 identifier for the recipient by examining a recipient notification identifier header in the e-
3 mail message to determine if the sender has populated the recipient notification identifier
4 header with information identifying the recipient.

1 12. The method according to claim 11 wherein the identifier comprises a
2 telephone number.

1 13. The method according to claim 10 wherein the network establishes an
2 identifier for the recipient by querying a database in accordance with a message address
3 for the recipient.

1 14. The method according to claim 13 wherein the identifier comprises a
2 telephone number.